



40th Staff Union Council 2022-2023

Minutes of the 2nd meeting
held on 21 April 2022 at 1.15 p.m.
and resumed on 27 April 2022 at 1.15 p.m.
via MS Teams
Adopted on 1 September 2022
Ref. SU-40-2

Council members present: Abdellaoui Naima, Assi Mohamed, Bali Mohamed, Chantrel Dominique, Chaoui Prisca, Duparc Philippe, Fabiani Hélène, Gazyev Jamshid, Hermelink Ursula, Johnson Laura, La Planeta Jean-Luc, Lewis-Lettington Nicole, Martinez Alfonso Begoña, Meyer Olivier, Nwokeabia Hilary, Palairet Rowland, Peck Arif Catherine Louise, Pejchal Viera, Richards Ian, Rueda Melendez Maria Almudena, Smith Bradford, Thomas Philip, Toualbia Radouan.

Council members absent: Lin Dan, Pioda Gerald.

The meeting began at 1:15 p.m.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes as reflected below.

2. Adoption of the minutes of the 1st meeting

The minutes of the 1st meeting were adopted without changes as recorded in the staff union secretariat.

3. Report of the outgoing Finance Commission

Mohamed Bali reported on behalf of the outgoing FC that the 2020-2021 accounts of the union had been externally audited, were in order and no recommendation had been issued. Recently, the funds collected during the collection for humanitarian relief in Ukraine were successfully transferred to the Ukrainian Red Cross.

4. Election of Finance Commission members

Ian Richards informed the Council that, as per the Regulations, the Executive Bureau had appointed **Mohamed Bali** as member of the Finance Commission, with three seats remaining for appointment. Having called for nominations:

Mohamed Assi was appointed FC member without opposition following the nomination by Naima Abdellaoui.

Dominique Chantrel was appointed FC member without opposition following the nomination by Prisca Chaoui.

Catherine Peck Arif was appointed FC member without opposition following the nomination by Mohamed Bali.

The appointed FC members shall serve as signatories in Staff Union bank accounts.

5. Report of the Executive Bureau

Mohamed Bali reported on the recent activity of the EB where the topic was not listed as a separate agenda item:

- a. At the recent Internal Justice Council meeting of 30 March, staff representatives supported recommendations to include the possibility of class actions and to give standing to staff unions, as well as participated in discussions on gender and racial aspects when accessing justice.

- b. Meetings were held with staff from ECE and OCHA to assess a number of issues, and a message was sent to ECE staff requesting them to raise specific matters that they would like staff representation to bring forward to the ECE ES at an upcoming meeting.
- c. CCISUA held a global townhall on Pension Fund issues earlier in February. The union would continue to work with the federation to push back on the proposed externalization of fixed-income Pension Fund assets.
- d. In respect to SMC:
 - i) An ad hoc SMC meeting was held earlier in April to discuss management's proposed new policy on classification and lump sum travel where staff representation objected to the lack of consultation on the matter and expressed concerns concerning terminology (e.g., the word "jobs" instead of "posts"). Concerning lump sum, unions rejected management's proposal to set fixed amounts of lump sum depending on destination, which the Administration seemingly intends to implement, nonetheless. The unions requested to continue discussions.
 - ii) The union contributed two papers to the batch submitted by staff unions to the SMC meeting taking place in Valencia (SMC X). It was noted that all the unions' position papers were circulated to the Council and no observations were received.

A Council member recalled the several papers circulated to the Council and remarked the special importance of one of them on privacy of staff, regretting that no discussion was held within the Council which made it difficult to make observations on a variety of issues as some Council members lacked background; especially on management's papers. A suggestion was made to create Council groups to address issues that are later raised at SMC.

Another Council member reiterated a previous appeal for increased release time from official duties which would allow Council members to dedicate more time to study SMC issues and gain more knowledge of the issues and proposals, to be able to actively participate. In that sense the work programme of the Council could include considering hiring interns or assistance to help Council members in preparing contributions to SMC.

Another Council member regretted that the timing of SMC was unfortunate as it coincided with staff union elections. Elections should have normally been held a month before and that would have allowed more time for discussions. It was also recalled that each union was independent in submitting its papers to SMC, and as such one did not have a say over the other's papers. Discussions among Council members were therefore most helpful on the staff union's papers. Concerning the need for Council members to familiarize with the background of issues, the importance of reading the previous minutes of meetings to catch up and the Staff Unions' regular broadcasts was highlighted..

6. Discussion and adoption of the work programme

A revised draft work programme was circulated. An objection was raised that the proposed amendments were substantive and far from being minor noting that such changes should have been brought to the EB earlier for discussion before presenting them to the Council. After further discussion and noting the need for further study of the proposals, the Council agreed to suspend the discussion until a future resumption of the 2nd Council meeting.

7. UN Port

A request was presented to provide a bridging loan to UN Port to carry out said improvements whilst it collected income, to be repaid to the union within a year. It was explained that UN Port (also known as the UN Beach) was a staff welfare-focused entity. UN Port collected income throughout the summer season mainly through entrance fees and subscriptions, but it required to make a number of improvements before the start of the season, to address safety concerns. It was requested that the proposal be studied by the newly appointed Finance Commission. It was clarified that the matter had already been studied by the former Finance Committee and that UN Port was under the oversight of the staff union through its committee. It was further noted that such bridging loans had been provided in past years and both were correctly reimbursed.

Given that the Council had not been given much time to study the proposal, the Council decided to suspend the discussion until the resumption of the meeting to allow time for more reflection about UN Port and the loan request.

8. Pension Fund

It was reported that the Pension Fund decided to postpone outsourcing its fixed-income portfolio. It was suggested that the Fund should recruit more personnel to manage its assets as funds would be more safely handled by staff. It was clarified that this was an important argument already being used by the CCISUA campaign and also reminded the Council that the Pension Fund had its own participant representatives and that it was the role of staff unions to support them.

9. Languages Service

It was reported that DGACM recently announced a new proposal for a new definition of reprise and changes to generic job profiles without any form of consultation, regretting that this was announced over a townhall meeting that denied staff the possibility to actively participate. Staff unions would organize a townhall meeting the following week with real staff participation to discuss the matter. Ian Richards highlighted the importance of coordinating among unions and having a single voice.

A comment was made that more should be done apart from meeting and voicing concerns, such as financing an independent audit of eLuna, the same translation tool used to justify the workload increase, which had been requested in the past already. Another Council member supported the suggestion for an audit of eLuna and asked who could carry it out. It was noted that such an audit would need the support of management because they controlled access to the tool. The Council agreed to allow the EB to review and agree on initial terms of reference of the proposal.

10. Staff-Management Committee

As this matter had already been covered under “Report of the Executive Bureau”, and as no Council member wished to take the floor, the subject was considered closed.

11. 40th Anniversary of the Staff Union

It was noted that 2022 was the 40th anniversary of the union and a proposal was made to organize both a commemoration event, which could take place at the UN beach, and a substantive event to uphold staff rights.

12. Any other business

A Council member raised the matter of management’s requirement to be vaccinated against Covid-19 before undertaking official travel, noting that having passed the infection should be added as equivalent to vaccination. It was noted that Covid-19-related illness was now covered under the staff rules’ appendix D, and that management had explained that not being vaccinated or fully recovered implied a potential liability for both the staff concerned and the organization, which was the reason why the requirement was in place.

The meeting was suspended at 2:40 p.m., to be resumed at a later date.

Resumption of the 2nd meeting

on 27 April 2022 at 1.15 p.m. via MS Teams

Council members present: Abdellaoui Naima, Assi Mohamed, Bali Mohamed, Chantrel Dominique, Chaoui Prisca, Fabiani Hélène, Gaziyeu Jamshid, Hermelink Ursula, Johnson Laura, La Planeta Jean-Luc, Lewis-Lettington Nicole, Martinez Alfonso Begoña, Meyer Olivier, Nwokeabia Hilary, Palairet Rowland, Peck Arif Catherine Louise, Pejchal Viera, Pioda Gerald, Richards Ian, Smith Bradford, Thomas Philip, Toualbia Radouan.

Council members absent: Duparc Philippe, Lin Dan, Rueda Melendez Maria Almudena.

The meeting was resumed at 1:15 p.m.

7. Resumed: UN Port

It was recalled that a set of documents related to UN Port and the request to grant it a bridging loan was circulated to the Council. Several questions were raised on the actual recipient of the loan, whether the agreement would be in writing and a repayment schedule foreseen, the UN Port's current cash position, and the scope and mandate of UN Port.

It was clarified that UN Port was an entity created from the partnership between the staff union and UNOG for the operation of the UN beach. UNOG owned the land and the restaurant structure and was responsible for the infrastructure maintenance and repairs, while installations outside of the restaurant, which served for the enjoyment of users, were under the responsibility of the UN Port partnership and their maintenance covered by UN Port resources. The recipient of the loan was the entity UN Port, and it would serve to bridge between expenses presently required and income to be received by UN Port later in the season. Such expenses were related to the replacement and maintenance of structures to avoid safety hazards, namely the sundeck. It was also clarified that a written agreement would be drafted whereby both parties agreed on the grant of the zero-interest loan and its repayment in either a single or multiple installments within one year of providing the funds. Said agreement would follow the same structure as previous bridging loans.

The Council proceeded to vote on the request. Seeing 12 votes in favour, 5 votes against, and 1 abstention, the request to provide a zero-interest bridging loan of CHF 50'000 to UN Port was approved, to be repaid to the staff union in either a single or multiple installments within one year of providing the funds.

Procedural motion: Request to record the meeting

There was a request to record the meeting. A discussion ensued with opinions both for and against recording, the purpose of recording and whether it would require an amendment to the Regulations and Rules of Procedure.

The Council proceeded to vote on the procedural motion. Seeing 8 votes in favour and 13 against, the motion was not carried.

6. Resumed: Discussion and adoption of the work programme

It was noted that the purpose of the work programme was to set the objectives for the Council's mandate and be realistic of what could be accomplished during the year. Different points of the draft work programme and latest modifications proposed were discussed. There was a discussion concerning a reference to Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) in the work programme and the application of human rights norms in the internal legal framework of the United Nations and with regard to its privileges and immunities. There was full agreement that the UN should align its internal legal system and regulations with human rights standards. It was noted that UN staff were bound towards the organization under its internal framework, and unfortunately not under ICCPR.

Following a lively debate on this issue, the Council proceeded to vote on the insertion of an ICCPR Article 7 reference in the work programme, namely on the bullet point that touched upon Covid-19. Seeing 4 votes in favour and 10 votes against, the Council agreed not to include such reference in the work programme.

The Council then proceeded to vote on the draft work programme, which included: reference in its heading to "human rights and labour norms and standards"; reference to implementation of collective bargaining

and the inclusion of ILO standards and labour rights; and maintain the word “demand” as action in certain bullet points. Seeing 11 votes in favour and 6 against, the Council adopted the work programme. [The adopted work programme is attached to the present minutes.]

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

United Nations
Office at Geneva
STAFF UNION



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Unies à Genève
SYNDICAT

Work Programme of the 40th UNOG Staff Union Council 2022-2023

Mindful of the current challenges facing our Organization, the UNOG Staff Union represents UN Secretariat staff in Geneva. In discharging its programme, all 25 members of the Staff Union Council shall contribute their time and efforts to reach our common goals in line with human rights and labour norms and standards.

I. To protect pay, jobs and promote careers, the Staff Union will:

- In the context of the Secretary-General's reform agenda (A/72/492) and the new global human resources strategy (A/73/372), work to protect and promote job security, address the increase in consultancy and the use of temporary appointments for ongoing functions.
- Work to improve career advancement for internal candidates, including staff from the Young Professional Programme to P-3, general service staff to P, and to regularize long-term serving temporary staff, as part of a strategy for gender parity, greater diversity and geographic representation.
- Work to protect remuneration, entitlements and pensions, in particular through advocacy within the ICSC.
- Demand the implementation of collective bargaining and the inclusion of ILO standards and labor rights, including the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, in how our conditions of service are set and improve the consultative process regarding new policies impacting working conditions of staff, including the Performance Management and Development System.
- Protect the current contractual framework and continue to push back on the introduction of new flexible contracts, protect jobs from arbitrary downsizing and unnecessary offshoring, and monitor delegation of authority in selection and promotion processes to ensure accountability.
- Address the impact on jobs, workload and working conditions in relation to the introduction of new technologies on certain categories of staff.
- In the new human resources policy, advocate for merit-based and non-discriminatory staff selection and promotion processes, including giving priority to internal candidates and a fairer system for roster selection, with a view to rewarding hard work while supporting a diverse workforce, as well as advocate for voluntary mobility.
- Demand greater independence of, and other improvements to, the internal justice system, including through the IJC.
- Maintain our solidarity with the "Fair Internships Initiative", and promoting geographic diversity amongst interns, and interns from developing countries.

- In working towards the above objectives, will work with other unions to coordinate positions to protect and promote the rights of staff, including through the SMC, ICSC and CCISUA.

II. To improve the work environment and support staff welfare, the Staff Union will:

- Ensure that measures adopted in the context of the post-COVID-19 pandemic protect the health, welfare and basic rights of all staff.
- Prevent any impact requirements on the health and wellbeing of staff resulting from increased productivity.
- Support staff in speaking out against misconduct, promote the improvement of investigation mechanisms, and ensure that appropriate measures are taken for accountability purposes.
- Combat all forms of discrimination and advocate for a more inclusive workplace in which staff are treated equally regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, class, sexual orientation, ability, and gender.
- Improve work life balance by advocating hybrid working for those who wish, reviewing parental leave, and ensuring that flexible working arrangements are applied fairly.
- Work to ensure a safe and secure workspace in the context of SHP.
- Support the development of staff facilities such as UN Beach and ensure support to clubs.
- Pursue growth in Staff Union funding through membership dues, including from all Council members, the staff magazine UN Today and other sources.

III. To keep staff informed and involved, the Staff Union will:

- Hold regular townhall meetings and inform staff through frequent broadcasts and other channels, including the staff magazine UN Today.
- Survey staff on key issues and developments.